

U-2 Pilot Sends Letter to Wife Asking Her to Go To Moscow to Be With Him During His Spy Trial

Powers Writes He Is in Good Health—Hurt Slightly in Parachute Jump

MILLEDGEVILLE, Ga., June 14 (UPI)—Francis Gary Powers, pilot of the U-2 plane downed in the Soviet Union has written his wife a letter asking her to visit him in a Soviet jail and to be with him when he faces trial and possible death for espionage.

The substance of the letter, written May 26 to 24-year-old Barbara Gay Powers, was made public today at a news conference.

It was the first detailed information about how Mr. Powers has been faring since he was shot down while on a spy mission over the Soviet Union May 1.

The news conference was conducted by Dr. James Baugh, Mrs. Powers' physician, who has been treating her for a nervous condition and a broken leg suffered in a skiing accident in Turkey. Dr. Baugh issued a statement prepared by Mrs. Powers, which contained abstracts from the largely personal letter "originating in Moscow" and received by her May 31.

Has Hopes of Return to U. S.

Mr. Powers wrote that he faced from seven years imprisonment to death for flights over the Soviet Union. He told his wife, however, that he still hoped to build their dream house in the United States.

He said he has "no idea of his fate" but had been informed by Soviet authorities that he would be tried for espionage under the Soviet Union's criminal code.

Mr. Powers urged his wife to visit him but said it would do more good to have her and other relatives with him during and after his trial than now, the statement said.

The pilot wrote that Soviet



United Press International
Mrs. Francis G. Powers

officials had told him any of his relatives would be welcome.

Mrs. Powers has not announced any plans to go to the Soviet Union but has not denied she will try to make the trip. Her father-in-law, Oliver W. Powers of Pound, Va., said yesterday he would visit his son in about sixty days.

The statement about the letter said Mr. Powers had described his first sensation of coming down in his parachute and the landing, in which he received a minor skin wound of the face. It continued:

"He stated he was taken into custody and a lady physician treated his wounds. A few days passed before his appetite returned, but he is getting plenty of food and has been treated well.

"A few days after his capture, he was taken on a tour of Moscow, where he was shown the wreckage of his plane. He described Moscow as a beautiful city.

"In prison he has books to read and he knew of my returning home to stay with mother.

Appears Hopeful of Return to U. S. Though He Faces Possible Death Sentence

The prison room has a yard where he is allowed to get sunshine.

"My husband has no idea of what his ultimate fate would be but had been advised he would be tried in accordance with Article 2 of their criminal code for espionage, and the possible sentence according to Soviet law could range from seven years to death.

"I am hopeful that my husband will be returned to me soon. It is my constant prayer that Mr. Khrushchev will reunite us as he has in other cases."

A great deal of the letter, of course, dealt with personal things," the statement said.

Mr. Baugh gave a hint of the personal matters Mrs. Powers mentioned. He said the pilot had written "our boat trip back will have to be postponed." Mr. Powers had been stationed in Turkey.

Mrs. Powers said the letter had been written in her husband's handwriting. She said "he did not appear restrained in the wording" and that the letter bore "no deletions and no marks."

Envoy in Dark on Trail

Llewellyn E. Thompson Jr., United States Ambassador to the Soviet Union, said on arriving at New York International Airport, Idlewild, Queens, yesterday, that he had "no idea" when the trail of Mr. Powers would take place.

He said he had returned for consultations and to make a report "on the general situation" to Christian A. Herter. He is scheduled to leave for the Soviet Union again June 23.

I said there was "nothing new" on the Powers case.